

Uncovering Values: The Key to Conflict Resolution

It's easy to get stuck when in conflict with our children or significant others. No matter what the argument is about, tension can escalate and things get personal when the people involved do not move from their positions. This tip sheet explores ways to move a conflict forward by shifting focus from positions to the values underneath.

What is really important to you?

Recognizing what is important to you in a conflict is a first step towards conflict resolution. For example, a disagreement with your child about:

- *Preferring dinosaur crackers over carrot sticks* might really be about **nutrition**.
- *Cleaning up toys* might really be about **orderliness**.
- *Taking building blocks from a sibling* might really be about **cooperation**.
- *Using the Internet alone* might really be about **safety**.

What is important to your child?

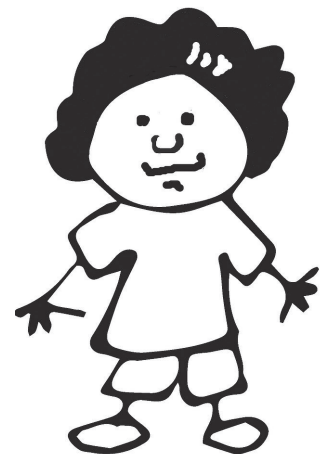
Recognizing the values and interests of another person is a helpful approach to moving a conflict forward. From the child's perspective, disagreements with you about:

- *Preferring dinosaur crackers over carrot sticks* might really be about **imagination**.
- *Cleaning up toys* might really be about **playfulness**.
- *Taking building block from a sibling* might really be about **curiosity**.
- *Using the Internet alone* might really be about **independence**.

Can both interests be honored?

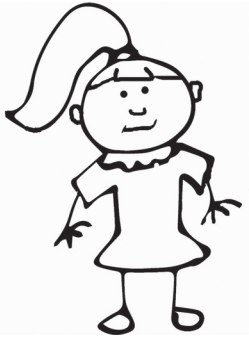
Try to brainstorm plans that can keep both interests in focus. The following are examples of this kind of approach. For the conflict involving:

- *Preferring dinosaur crackers over carrot sticks*, pretend your child is a hungry dinosaur who just found "dinosaur food". **(Nutrition + Imagination)**
- *Cleaning up toys*, create a 'clean-up game' or use a silly song to facilitate the process. **(Orderliness + Playfulness)**
- *Taking building blocks from a sibling*, brainstorm a project for them to build together, such as a city, space station, amusement park, etc. **(Cooperation + Curiosity)**
- *Using the Internet alone*, limit the child's use of the Internet to specific sites with "safe mode" or "safe search", or use a specifically designed "kids browser" **(Safety + Independence)**.



Uncovering Values: The Key to Conflict Resolution *(continued)*

Try this at home . . .



Make a copy of the list below for every family member old enough to participate in this activity. Each person should circle up to ten values important to them. Try to guess each other's answers then share what was circled. Were your guesses accurate? Were others accurate about you? Try to remember this activity next time you are working on a family conflict. What plan can be created that will honor the values involved?



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|----------------|---------------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Accomplishment | Culture | Honor | Passion | Self Respect |
| Accountability | Curiosity | Hospitality | Patience | Selflessness |
| Accuracy | Decisiveness | Intelligence | Peace | Serenity |
| Activeness | Dependability | Independence | Perceptiveness | Seriousness |
| Adaptability | Devotion | Individuality | Perfection | Serendipity |
| Adventure | Discretion | Justice | Perseverance | Social Skills |
| Aggressiveness | Diversity | Keeping Promises | Privacy | Solidarity |
| Apologies | Dominance | Keeping Secrets | Professionalism | Spirituality |
| Assertiveness | Duty | Kindness | Punctuality | Stability |
| Beauty | Education | Knowledge | Quiet | Social Status |
| Being the Best | Efficiency | Lawfulness | Recognition | Strength |
| Belonging | Enthusiasm | Learning | Reliability | Success |
| Calmness | Equality | Leadership | Religion | Support |
| Career | Excellence | Logic | Reputation | Teamwork |
| Challenges | Excitement | Loyalty | Resourcefulness | Thankfulness |
| Charm | Extravagance | Masculinity | Respect | Thoroughness |
| Cheerfulness | Faithfulness | Manners | Preparedness | Tolerance |
| Cleverness | Family | Maturity | Responsibility | Tradition |
| Commitment | Fashion | Moderation | Reverence | Trustworthiness |
| Communication | Fearlessness | Modesty | Romance | Warmth |
| Community | Femininity | Nutrition | Safety | Wisdom |
| Compassion | Financial Stability | Privacy | Solitude | Work Ethic |
| Competence | Fitness | Persuasiveness | Security | Youthfulness |
| Competition | Flexibility | Philanthropy | | |
| Confidence | Forgiveness | Playfulness | | |
| Conformity | Frankness | Popularity | | |
| Consideration | Freedom | Power | | |
| Consistency | Friendliness | Obedience | | |
| Control | Friendship | Open-mindedness | | |
| Coolness | Fun | Openness | | |
| Cooperation | Generosity | Optimism | | |
| Courage | Gentleness | Orderliness | | |
| Creativity | Honesty | Originality | | |

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